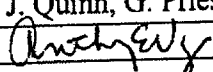


NEW JERSEY**2000 - 2001****Guidelines and Application
BEST PRACTICES****Deadline for Application to County Office:
November 27, 2000**

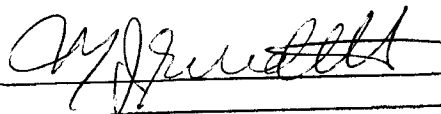
The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category	<u>Social Studies</u> (Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name	<u>"Traveler" A Social Studies Companion</u>
Number of Schools with Practice	<u>Two (2)</u> (If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)

County	Middlesex
District (Proper Name)	Spotswood School District
Address	Spotswood School District 105 Summerhill Road Spotswood, NJ 08884 T: 732-723-2236 F: 732-251-7666 E: avaz@spotswood.k12.nj.us
Telephone/Fax/E-mail	
Chief School Administrator	Dr. Anthony Vaz
Nominated School #1	E. Raymond Appleby School
Address	23 Vliet St. Spotswood, NJ 08884 T: 732-723-2213 F: 732-251-7666 E: jquinn@spotswood.k12.nj.us
Telephone/Fax/E-mail	
Principal	James P. Quinn, Jr.
Program Developer(s)	Geri Priest
Application Prepared By	J. Quinn, G. Priest
Chief School Administrator's Signature	

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY

Approved: ☒ Yes ☐ No
 County Superintendent's Signature


NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**New Jersey
Best Practices
INFORMATION FOR ADDITIONAL SCHOOL(S)/DISTRICT(S)**

If the nominated practice is conducted in more than one school, complete the information below for one to three additional schools. If the nominated practice is conducted in more than four schools, copy this page and complete the information for all schools. If the nominated practice is included in more than one district, copy the cover page, complete the information for the additional districts and number the additional districts as District #2, District #3, etc. in the District (Proper Name) column.

This is a public document. Type or keyboard proper names and verify that the information is accurate.

Nominated School # 2 (Proper Name)	Co Austin Schoenly ES
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
E-mail	
Principal	Kathryn Arabia
Program Developer(s)	Jennifer Romeo

**NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION**

Application Requirements: Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

1. **RESPONSES** to the information and the statements below must be **ANONYMOUS** and **ACCURATE**. No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements
2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM** on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4. Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
3. Application must be keyboarded on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, portrait format. Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font must be used. (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)
4. **KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response. Format your response for accuracy and clarity.
5. The information on page 4 and the responses to statements must be copied on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
6. The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
7. The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by November 27, 2000, with the Itemized List of District Applications form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School	Grade Levels	Practice Name <u>Traveler: A Social Studies Companion</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School	<u>5-6</u>	Number of Schools with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School		Number of Districts with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School		Location <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/City <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban With Urban Characteristics
<input type="checkbox"/> High School		<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town <input type="checkbox"/> Rural
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Gifted and Talented Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness
<input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education and Diversity	<input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts Literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development	<input type="checkbox"/> World Languages
	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.
3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.

**NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION**

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The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School	Grade Levels	Practice Name <u>Traveler's A Social Studies Companion</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School	<u>5-6</u>	Number of Schools with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School	<u> </u>	Number of Districts with Practice <u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School	<u> </u>	Location <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/City <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban With Urban Characteristics
<input type="checkbox"/> High School	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town <input type="checkbox"/> Rural
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: <u> </u>	<u> </u>	

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

- Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
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- Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
- Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

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NEW JERSEY BEST PRACTICES 2000-2001 APPLICATION

“Traveler” A Social Studies Companion

Practice and Objectives

The practice proposed for consideration is an activity that engages the students and encourages them to expand their observation and writing skills. It also improves their skills at public speaking.

This activity began several years ago in a fifth grade class with a simple backpack in the shape of a horse's head. The teacher named the backpack “Traveler” and packed Traveler with a blank journal, pens, and a small amount of money (approximately \$5.00). The teacher encouraged and allowed individual students to take Traveler home with them over the weekend or on vacation, and to record their experiences in the journal. The students usually used a portion of the money to purchase some sort of memento from the place they visited. Traveler is currently adorned with key rings and stickers from places as near as Great Adventure and as far away as Hawaii. When students returned to school, they read their journal entries to the class or made a brief presentation about their adventures with Traveler. They are required to locate their destination on a map if the journey took them out of state, and give the estimated mileage they traveled.

What started out as a simple activity has grown into such a popular idea, that the teacher has had to go out and purchase two other horse backpacks (named Mr. Ed and Cody) because so many students want to take the horse with them wherever they go. Students have taken photographs of the various places they visited and have included these photos in a photo album. Many students have asked people whom they have met in their travels to jot down a few lines in the journal.

Certainly a major thrust of this program is to encourage students to become keen explorers and observers of their surroundings, and then to record their observations in a clear and interesting narrative. But one of the most positive and unexpected benefits of this activity is the impact a simple backpack has had on shy or introverted students. Students who are usually reluctant to speak out or take part in class activities are eager to take Traveler with them, to reach out to strangers and to make new friends. Having Traveler with them is almost like having an inanimate supporter. Students return to class excited about their trips and eagerly recount their adventures in great detail.

Standards

This activity addresses a range of core curricular standards, but places special emphasis on the Social Studies standards that follow:

6.5: *All students will acquire historical understanding of varying cultures throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.* This activity allows students to examine and understand the similarities and differences among cultures, and to understand the customs of people from different geographic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Students are also able to examine and understand material artifacts of a culture. Students often return to class with artifacts or pictures of artifacts and describe them to members of the class.

6.7: *All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying the world in spatial terms.* When students return to class and make their presentations, they use the globe or a wall map in order to show the class exactly where they traveled. The world map on the wall is covered with flags indicating all the places where students have visited.

6.8: *All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying human systems in geography.* With this activity, students learn how improvements in transportation, communication and technology have resulted in global interdependence. They are able to examine and explain causes and effects of urbanization and to compare physical characteristics of places and regions.

6.9: *All students will acquire geographical understanding by studying the environment and society.* Students who have visited the National Parks are able to explain and predict very easily how the physical environment can accommodate and be affected by human activity, and to identify the consequences of natural environmental changes.

Additionally, some of the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards are also addressed:

Standard 1: *All students will develop career planning and workplace readiness skills.* With this activity, students often come into contact with people employed in a variety of fields, and are able to identify skills needed to succeed in the work world.

Standard 3: *All students will use critical thinking, decision making and problem-solving skills.* The Traveler activity is a perfect avenue for students to formulate questions, identify and access resources and other sources of information, and conduct systematic observations. Furthermore, through active participation, students are able to identify patterns and investigate relationships.

Finally, this activity addresses standard 3.1 of the language arts and literacy standards, which states: *All students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences.* The culminating feature of this activity is the presentation that the students make to their classmates during which they recount their travels with Traveler. Students must speak before a group to present information and tell a story. Often, students use visual aids during this presentation.

Meeting the Educational Needs of Students

This activity meets the needs and abilities of a wide range of students. With Traveler at their side, students are emboldened to ask questions about the different places they visit, to engage in dialogue with parents, family members and friends, and often to investigate and research more thoroughly their various destinations. This activity helps students to understand just how small the world really is, and that people have more in common than not. Knowing that they have to make an oral presentation causes children to be more focused on writing carefully in their journals. Making a presentation in front of their peers gives them a relaxed atmosphere in which to practice their public speaking skills.

Traveler has made over one hundred (100) excursions with children, including 20 since the beginning of September 2000. One excursion was to an elementary school in San Diego, California. This led to a year long pen pal relationship between the children, thus creating lasting friendships in two cases. It allowed the students to improve their letter writing skills. It also gave them an opportunity to share their experiences through written narratives, photographs, and videos of school plays, class trips, and other special events such as D.A.R.E. Graduation. The children in the class became aware of the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in that particular San Diego school, leading them to do research and giving them a better understanding of the Mexican culture they were studying at the time, since several of the students were Mexican or of Mexican descent, including the teacher herself.

Replication

Because Traveler is so portable, this program is quite easy to replicate. The most important feature in guaranteeing the success of this activity is the teacher. The teacher involved must be upbeat and must encourage students to be active participants in their travels. It is important that the teacher help students feel confident and comfortable in reporting their visits to their classmates. The teacher is also necessary in conveying

the virtues of this activity to parents, and encouraging them to help their children understand their surroundings more thoroughly. The initial start-up costs of this program are minimal. Requirements include a sturdy backpack, a steno notepad and a pen, a one-use camera, maps of the state and the world, and pins and tags.

Future of the Program

There are many possible areas of expansion for this program. The teacher would like to send Traveler to class in another state in exchange for a mascot from the other school. Since Traveler's journeys may take him to different parts of the country and visit with people of different cultures, the children would become more familiar with and have more understanding of many other ethnic groups, cultures, and traditions. They would expand their knowledge of the environment and geographic locations through the experiences of children living in another part of the country. They would be able to make comparisons between how children in other areas of the country spend their leisure time, particularly in relation to an area with a different climate.

The program has already expanded to another teacher in the building who is working with Special Education children. The project is in the early stages, but the children have already become eager to take their "mascot" with them on trips.

If this award was granted to the teacher, it would be used:

1. To purchase local, national, and world maps;
2. Geography software related to continents, land forms, bodies of water, climate, natural resources;
3. Videos related to the area of travel, individual states, customs, religions, etc.;
4. Postage to send Traveler to and from another school;
5. Cameras and film development